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German "Experts on America."

One of Germany's methods of propaganda for the stimulation of the fighting spirit of the people, it is stated, is the delivery of lectures and the production of writings by so-called "experts on America," men who have been here and who are supposed to possess especial knowledge of American conditions. One of these is Dr. George Barthelme, formerly correspondent of the Cologne Gazette in this city, and another is Capt. Boy-Ed, at one time naval attache to the German embassy here. Dr. Barthelme has been delivering some remarkable lectures. Lately he said at Berlin that it was utterly impossible for us to send as many troops over as we were claiming, and added that the sentiment of the people of this country was strongly against the war. So much for that expert.

Now comes Capt. Boy-Ed, according to a tale told by a German soldier prisoner, with a book giving the result of his "investigations" in the United States. One of his most interesting disclosures is that the United States entered the war because of a secret treaty with Great Britain, which compelled intervention. And the captain's revelations, it seems, are accepted at full value in Germany. The people believe them. Why should they not? They are made solemnly, with asseverations of positive proof. Germany is herself expert at that sort of thing.

We need not take these matters seriously over here. The statements of Dr. Barthelme disprove themselves as the American soldiers reach French soil by the hundreds of thousands. The charge of a secret treaty, made by Capt. Boy-Ed, is fantastic enough to be believed by any gullible people, and no amount of disclaimer will check that belief. The Germans are proving themselves the most easily beguiled nation in the world. If a whiskered Teuton should arise and declare that the Germans are the chosen people, selected for the supreme government of the world, with a tracing of lineage to divine sources, he would be acclaimed as a prophet and followed implicitly. And the kaiser himself has come pretty near to doing just that thing.

Truth is, any German who has the stamp of government authority can get away with almost any sort of stupid lie about any other people. But when the redoubtable armies break in the field and the supermen in arms prove vincible, and the boasts of unconquerable prowess are shown by deeds to be mockeries, this simple and childlike faith will fade. The game Germany is playing is a desperate one, and the end is plain. Every gambler finally gets what is coming to him, and Germany is now in the last stage of the greatest gamble the world has ever witnessed.

President Wilson is described as whistling as he returned to the White House after a conference with the Secretary of War. It is a bad sign for the Berlin crowd. Psychologists agree that a man never whistles unless he feels confident of the future.

As an influence for lasting peace the American soldier surpasses anybody who ever called in the neighborhood of The Hague.

The French may yet insist on picking out a few nice streets in Berlin and naming them after eminent American fighters.

The Democracy of the Trenches.

This is taken from a report of the speech delivered by Mr. Roosevelt at Springfield Monday at the Illinois centennial exposition:

"Col. Roosevelt enumerated some of the industrial problems that must be solved. He advocated co-operation among individuals and control by the government to help business men succeed, but demanded a fair division of profits among all concerned. Workingmen, he said, should have their right insured to collective action, including collective bargaining. In a very real sense, he said, they should be made partners in the business, with a share in the profits and, at least along certain lines, a share in the control. But there must be no limiting of production, no reduction of the efficiency of the skillful and hard-working men to the plane of the shiftless and inefficient."

After-the-war problems are certain to be numerous, and all of them difficult. Just how numerous and just how difficult time alone can tell. Should peace come within a few months, there will be a great deal of work for our statesmen to do. If it should be delayed several years, and meanwhile the war take on new phases, the work will be greater in quantity and complicated in the extreme.

We have started on a new line, and are moving rapidly. There is little time to consider more than the plain needs of the hour, and little disposition to do more than supply them. The war is on, and we are in it, and the demand is that we go through with it. Later, after all is over, and "business is business" again, we shall be obliged to take stock and decide as to the future.

That future will show a necessity which has existed since the foundation of the government, and will continue while the government in any form continues. Capital and labor must consult each other's interests. Prosperity—the real article—means good dividends and good wages. Those who supply the capital and those who supply the labor must share in liberal measure in the returns.

The old order is changing. The new order is as yet but dimly foreshadowed. But enough can be seen to warrant expectation that the new will possess a stronger tang of democracy than did the old. The war will prove a great leveler. There begins to appear what may be called the democracy of the trenches. Risks and hardships and sacrifices borne in common are bringing men closer together, and giving them a different view of life and its opportunities and obligations.

Mr. Roosevelt is young enough to hope to help in the establishment of the new order; and by giving it thought now, and watching developments closely, he is qualifying for the work.

The Senate and Business.

Business cannot complain of the Senate finance committee in the matter of hearings on the revenue measure. The invitation of Chairman Simmons is all that could be desired. "All industries are asked to appoint representative spokesmen, so as to avoid duplication of evidence." In addition, written briefs may be filed with the committee.

This was expected. The committee has always in such cases treated business with much consideration. Business has often turned to the committee with confidence, and has never been disappointed. It turned last year; and with good results. The House measure, drawn and passed in haste, was greatly improved by the committee; and the Senate supported the committee's performance.

Now let business respond cordially to the committee's overture. What is wanted is a measure satisfactory to all whom it concerns. There is no controversy as to the sum total. Everybody understands and concedes that that must be large. The size of the war order is now appreciated, and the order must be filled.

The only controversy relates to the details for raising the money; and there is room for controversy. Assessable sources are in plenty. The people in the main are prosperous. They have approved of the war, and are willing to support it.

But they are entitled to opinions about assessments, and many of them have opinions. And having opinions they want to express them.

It is easily assumable that neither the House nor the Senate wants to injure business. Both know well how much depends on business; that unless business continues in good shape it cannot meet the heavy obligations now imposed, and to be imposed, on it. The source of the golden eggs must be guarded and preserved.

But very serious injury might be inflicted by assessments made in disregard of business interests as explained by business. Business is supposed to understand its business. It should not have an undisputed way, of course, for it has a full share of selfishness. But its representations of this revenue question at this vital time are entitled to be weighed by both House and Senate for all they may be worth. A square deal for everybody.

The New Draft Ages.

There should be no confusion regarding the registration under the new draft ages. On the date named by the President for the enrollment of the people, September 12, the age of the person on that date is to govern. If the individual is eighteen years old and has not yet reached forty-six on that day he must register. If he is one day short of being eighteen or has become forty-six on that day he need not register.

In all cases of doubt—and there really should be no doubt, so plain is the rule—the person should seek for official information in advance of the date of registration.

There will be much less confusion in the new registration than there was last year. The machinery of the selective draft law has been well organized and the people are now thoroughly acquainted with the principles of the procedure. So smoothly has the machinery worked and so expert have become those connected with it, that the larger registration under the extended ages will probably be effected with a minimum of friction. One of the most gratifying developments of our participation in the war is this organization under Provost Marshal General Crowder's direction. The selective draft law and its virtually universal acceptance by the American people may be regarded as the decisive factor in this war.

Next winter may find many a man wishing he could trade off his limousine for a private coal car.

Many a weary old motor today is getting the first Sunday rest it has known in many a month.

Gasoline Saving.

At present the gasoline saving matter is wholly up to the motor car users for their own determination. It is like the question of the buying of liberty bonds or subscribing to war relief funds. Each person must determine for himself how far he can contribute. Every gallon of gasoline saved by cutting out unnecessary motoring is an aid to the government in the prosecution of the war. Every gallon used needlessly for pleasure riding takes away that much fuel that might be better employed toward victory.

Consequently the question is one for personal decision. Conscience must be the guide and there can be no question that all but a very few motorists will decide in favor of conservation rather than gasoline use, for the great majority of the American people are conscientious and patriotic, and this request to be economical merely offers them another opportunity for service that they will doubtless grasp.

Savings affected through voluntary action by the people without regulation or rule or law are more to be desired than compulsory economies. Notwithstanding the large numbers of men who have been selected for military service most of our people have as yet no direct part in the war. And practically all of them are eager for chances to contribute in one way or another to the war strength of the United States. The fuel administration has simply indicated such a way.

Impure and Dirty Milk.

An utter absurdity of law is disclosed by the case of a District milk dealer whose product has been found to be foul with dirt and whose permit to sell cannot be revoked because the milk was not brought into the District. In other words, dirty milk from Maryland or Virginia may subject the dealer to a revocation of license, but dirty milk from the District renders him liable to no such penalty. He may be prosecuted under the pure food law and punished severely if convicted. In the case in point possibly the presence of a dead mouse in the milk may convince a jury that the milk is unclean. But the license to sell cannot be revoked as the law now stands.

Of course, the amendment of the law is indicated as necessary. It will probably be urged at once. The dead mouse should surely have a moving effect upon Congress. But why should this ridiculous inconsistency of the law have been permitted to stand so long without correction? It is one of the mysteries of law making.

Berlin will never be able to explain to the German public what those expensive submarines were doing while America was sending millions of men to France.

Kaiser Wilhelm and Prince Willie are both having a struggle to keep their family pride up to any comfortable degree of sincerity.

When the socialists took up the term "international" they managed to burden a perfectly good word with a hint of sinister suggestion.

T. R. denounces slackers. T. R. of late manages to say a number of things that arouse no resentment worth considering.

SHOOTING STARS.

BY PHILANDER JOHNSON.

Desperate Appeal.

"Look here, friend," exclaimed the square-jawed man to the head waiter, "can't you send somebody over to this table who has been a base ball pitcher?"

"A pitcher, sir?"

"Yes. I have been here for three-quarters of an hour waiting for somebody to put something across this plate."

Calculating

"My doctor warns me not to overeat."

"Any objection to that?"

"No. Only I could have gotten the same advice from Mr. Hoover for nothing."

Sad.

Our dachshund was a quaint delight
And something of a pet.
He bristled up and sought a fight—
How sad, already yet!

Distrust.

"My husband has written me three ten-page letters describing how he has taken care of the rubber tree and the goldfish and everything. I distrust him."

"Why?"

"If he were working as hard as he says he is, he wouldn't have time to do all that letter writing."

People who assume that a pleasant disposition is something to be imposed upon are responsible for many a self-protecting grouch.

This summer was a disappointment to the man who thought that if he would furnish the ground it would be easy to hire somebody to work the garden.

A man never realizes what the term "unskilled labor" can mean until he boldly volunteers to repair the water faucets and take down the screen doors.

Beginning at Home.

Why speak in a reproving tone
Unto a balky telephone
And criticise with emphasis
The errors of some care-worn miss?

Why when the street car man talks rough
Reply in kind? There is enough
Of agitation in the air—
And, anyhow, he wouldn't care.

Why strive with scowls to regulate
The men who serve and make you wait;
Who hurry by and let you stand
Pleading, with money in your hand.

'Tis not for you, oh, generous friend,
The manners of mankind to mend.
If you can smile and do your task
'Tis all this weary world will ask.

POLITICS AT HOME

"Standpatters" and "Progressives."

In the thoughtless parlance of a recent day, the late Senator Gallinger was a "standpatter." He was tagged as non-progressive. Movement was objectionable to him. On the tariff question he was a Chinese-waller. On the question of a merchant marine he was scowled at as a subsidist. On the question of Army and Navy preparedness he was accused of playing the game of the militarists. In a word, as his political opponents saw and described him, he was behind, and out of touch with, the times.

There were many such men. The New Hampshire statesman was in distinguished company. He did not complain, but smilingly accepted all the exaggerations employed by the opposition. He was a protectionist, but not a Chinese-waller. He rated a merchant marine so highly, he favored subsidies toward the building and operation of one. And he saw so clearly the inadequacies of the American military machine, he urged, early and late, the proper remedy.

Verily the "standpatters" have had their reward, and are justified. But for the many years of a protective tariff, the business now co-ordinated for war purposes would lack a great deal of its volume and variety. Under protection, America has thrived wonderfully as a producing nation.

And what a blessing the country would have enjoyed if at the beginning of the war there had been a first-class American merchant marine in being! As it was, we had no carrier ships; and the necessity for them was so great, huge appropriations had to be made for building a large fleet. Subsidies, even in most liberal sums, would have been the merest bagatelle by comparison.

The same is true as to the Army and Navy. When war was declared we had no Army, and our Navy, while fit for its size, was far too small. The country was pathetically, and almost ridiculously, unprepared; and the failures growing out of our feverish haste to get in fighting trim, and just now being uncovered, have cost us huge sums of money.

The "standpatters," so much derided, were the "progressives" of their day, while the self-named "progressives" were the "standpatters" in spirit and purpose.

J. D. Cameron.

"Don" Cameron in the days of his activity was rated as a very clever politician. He inherited his taste for the game. His father, whom he succeeded in the Senate, was clever before him. Their methods were not identical, but both succeeded. The Cameronian dynasty in Pennsylvania existed for a long time. The son retired of his own accord, and left things in good shape for his successor.

The younger Cameron had had a thorough training in business, and this stood him in important stead when in middle life he turned to politics. He was a fine example of the business man in politics. He knew business values. He addressed himself to business questions. As a senator from a great mining and manufacturing state, he had use for all his knowledge, and, using it well, he kept his hold on his constituents.

The politics of that time was strenuous, and Mr. Cameron was a strict party man. But he was popular personally with his opponents. They believed in his sincerity. They saw him play fair, and hence respected him.

This is not to say that he escaped criticism. As a matter of fact, he had his full share. In campaign years, when he was all alive for his own side and striving for everything in reach, he was pelted along with his fellows.

But that was politics. When the campaign ended, the fury ended. Some of Mr. Cameron's warmest friends sat on the democratic side of the Senate chamber.

He addressed the Senate infrequently, though capable of a very clear and informing statement. His power was shown in committee work, to which he gave close attention. Set speeches were not in his line; and he seldom attended when they were on the Senate's card for deliverance by others.

He had great love for and faith in the country—was a thoroughly patriotic man, appreciated America's resources, and expected them to be developed to advantage in America's stand among the great nations.

At eighty-five he departs, with the whole world in commotion, and speculation as to the future keen everywhere, and nowhere keener than in his own country. And when building time comes—the waste places to be attended to—men of his stamp and training will be in request, and will play an important part in office.

September formally adds the oyster to the list of foodstuffs that may be used without stint. The first month with the magic "R" was never more welcome.

One form of "irreducible minimum" is what will be left of Hindenburg's army if the Hohenzollerns compel him to go on fighting.

If Lenine and Trotzky were to fall out, each would come pretty near losing the only reliable friend he has in Russia.

The old-fashioned man with the trotting horse is the only one permitted to joy-ride today.

Man power is in such demand that the Hohenzollerns are pretty nearly the only "idle rich" in the world.

WHAT THE GOVERNMENT IS DOING

Health in War Plants.

Experts of the public health service have recently been active in planning and conducting investigations in factories that are manufacturing war supplies, for the purpose of determining whether unnecessary fatigue is present, and discovering the conditions under which a maximum continuous output may be obtained.

In the present emergency caused by the war it is desirable to understand all practicable ways by which industrial work may be made more efficient and output may be increased to a maximum without resorting to unwise or burdensome demands on labor. It is pointed out by those who have been making this study that it is often possible to increase output temporarily by increasing the work of the employe, but if he is overworked his output soon falls off; hence, such a method, if carried far, quickly defeats itself and in the long run is not profitable. Given adequate equipment, adequate administration of the plant and a proper spirit among the employes, fatigue is the greatest single obstacle to a maximum output. Fatigue diminishes output not only directly, but indirectly, by increasing accidents and the proportion of spoiled work and by causing sickness and absences of employes. It, will, therefore, be profitable to employers, to employes and to the nation itself, the authorities believe, to inquire into the ways by which fatigue may be reduced.

It was found as the result of the investigation which has just been completed that one of the common methods of reducing fatigue is by introducing recess or resting periods during a working spell. During such periods, which, in order to be effective, must be obligatory, and not discretionary on the part of the workers, they should have an opportunity to rest, relax, move about and engage in other simple recreation. It is said that a little food or a cup of tea or cocoa taken at such a time is often remarkably restorative.

It often happens, it was found, that several five-minute resting periods may be advantageously introduced into a working spell. Where this is not practicable the officials have come to the conclusion that a single recess, of suitable duration, will suffice. The recuperation thus gained by a tired worker often increases his working capacity for the remainder of the spell.

Much of the modern industrial work consists of a constant and rapid repetition of the same movement. A woman worker in one munition factory was recently observed to handle during her day's work 24,000 pieces of shell fuse and put them through a special process From 7 o'clock in the morning until 12 and from 1 until 6 she sat at her machine and fed it with the succession of brass pieces. The occasional introduction of a little variety into her work by training her to some alternative process might easily have diminished her fatigue without diminishing the number of finished pieces, the experts think.

Arguments that favor the short working day apply directly to the question of overtime. If the usual day's work is such as just to stop short of undue fatigue, overtime means overwork. It is, of course, sometimes necessary, in order to complete a contract within a required time, to call on the workers to expend the greater effort required. The experts who have made this study, however, say that it is a dangerous expedient and a particularly insidious way of diminishing a worker's efficiency. Overtime work is apt to result in an increased amount of spoiled work and in lessened output and increased absences on subsequent days, and because of this, and also in view of the increased rate of wages that must usually be paid, overtime is not as profitable as is often supposed. It should be resorted to only in times of exceptional emergency, and even then not for many days in succession, the experts say.

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Educating Officers of General Staff.

Officials of the War Department in urging a school for educating general staff officers say that as time goes on a great number of such officers will be needed at home and with our armies in the field. In this connection it is pointed out that in spite of the very large number of French general staff officers who have been graduated from their war college in past years and were disseminated in the various regiments, it has been found necessary, after four years of war, to reconstitute schools in France for the special education of officers in general staff work, and regret has been expressed in very high quarters at the closing of the French War College, as was done on the outbreak of war, in order to send its professors and students to the front.

Our own Army officials believe, therefore, that in the near future brief courses of instruction in general staff duties might be organized at the War College to cover at least the preliminary training of regular and reserve officers in general staff duties immediately applicable to the present war. The presence in the United States of a number of experts in the French general staff would be of inestimable value in assisting our officers in this instruction, which could be accomplished by more advanced courses in schools back of our line in France. If the French now feel the needs of such schools, it would seem that we have an even greater reason for instituting them.

The War Department experts call attention to the fact that the number of officers which the laws of France permitted in time of peace to be detailed to the general staff was 640 officers below the grade of brigadier general. There is no limitation on the number of general officers; before the war it varied from 10 to 15.

These 640 officers were considered necessary to do the general staff work in time of peace of an army of less than 600,000 men. The United States now has about 3,000,000 men under arms, and the law limits our general staff to ninety-one officers. It can be seen, therefore, under what a disadvantage it has been laboring.

From a little nucleus, which we had at the beginning of the war, amounting to 4,800 officers and 97,000 men, and which included the large garrisons necessarily maintained in Panama, Hawaii and the Philippines, the military establishment has been expanded to more than 3,000,000 men actually under arms. That such a feat could be accomplished in such a short time is, in the opinion of war experts, chiefly due to the ability, energy and careful theoretical education of the officers of our Regular Army. For experience in such undertakings did not exist, and no practical training in preparation for them had ever been possible.

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Grazing in the National Forests.

To meet the war needs of the country, sheep and cattle have been grazed on the national forests in increased numbers this year. Half a million more sheep and nearly a quarter of a million more cattle, it is estimated, have been taken care of than last year, according to officials of the forest service. This brings the total number of stock grazed under permit to about 9,000,000 sheep, 2,360,000 head of cattle and 51,000 swine.

This increase is on top of an increase of 200,000 sheep and 100,000 cattle made last year, when it was recognized that the country's need for beef, mutton, wool and hides called for the fullest possible use of the national forest ranges. Through conservative handling of these ranges for more than ten years their productiveness has been steadily rising. With the country at war, officials of the Department of Agriculture felt it was necessary to take some chances of overgrazing in the interest of larger immediate production. The results of admitting a larger number of live stock were, however, carefully watched. The further increases made this year are mainly made possible by finding out how additional stock can be grazed without injury to the ranges through more intensive methods of use.

These include readjustments in the allotments of range, closer utilization of the forage and the opening up of country not before used for grazing stock. In order to make the new areas accessible to stock it has been in many instances necessary to construct trails or driveways. Watering facilities have also been improved. The various increased allowances have been authorized only after careful consideration.

* * *

Education in Other Warring Countries.

A survey of educational conditions in other warring countries has been made by experts of the bureau of education. It is not yet possible fully to estimate the profound and far-reaching effects of the war upon education. Those of our specialists who have been studying the matter say that a prolongation of hostilities may not only aggravate evils hitherto successfully combated, but develop situations altogether unprecedented. Certain facts, however, already appear with sufficient clearness to indicate, in general lines, the tendencies of the present upheaval. These facts crop out, with striking similarity, in all the countries now at war—in each of the central powers as well as of the allied nations—and this universality gives them an added significance, the experts point out.

It is obvious, for example, that the damage to the educational systems of the warring countries has been merely material and quantitative. School buildings have been destroyed or commandeered; teachers have been drafted; universities and higher schools have lost in some instances as much as 75 per cent of their regular enrollment; war industries have claimed thousands of older boys whose education has thus been disturbed or postponed, if not permanently ended. But interest in public education has nowhere been weakened, nor have the standards of instruction been lowered. On the contrary, Europe has never been so alive to the supreme social importance of education as in this time when all established social institutions are being tested as by fire.

It has been found that France and England are engaged in a simultaneous reorganization of their respective systems of public education, and the continuation school projects now pending in the parliaments at Paris and London are essentially identical. They both introduce universal compulsory continuation schooling of general and vocational character. The English bill provides, in addition, for an extension and perfection of elementary school compulsion. In Italy the elementary school system is undergoing extension, and provision has been made, it was found, for instruction of illiterate adults.

In addition to the present activities, it has been found that extensive plans for educational reconstruction and reforms after the war are under consideration in all the warring countries. In these plans several features appear with striking similarity in the different countries. It is, for example, the consensus of educational opinion that improvement must be sought in technical and vocational education, in modern languages and commercial subjects, in physical and character training.

It is said that a recent dispatch from Rome states that in Austria, owing to the serious shortage of food, school children are suffering from malnutrition to such an extent that it is practically useless for them to continue their studies.

* * *

Insuring Fighters.

Not the least of the many interesting new jobs that Uncle Sam has undertaken since the war began is that of soldiers' and sailors' insurance. After the enlisted man has been required by the government to do his full duty to protect his family, and after the government has provided such supplementary protection as the circumstances require for his family through family allowances, and has also provided through compensation for the risks and hazards of his military or naval service, an opportunity is offered to officers and enlisted men alike to insure themselves at low cost, purposely brought within the means of all, and thus give themselves and their families all the added protection that human foresight and a generous people can provide. This work is under the direction of the Treasury Department.

Government insurance furnished at cost, which does not include any charge for administrative expenses nor many of the usual overhead charges nor the extra war risk which ordinary business insurance companies would have to include, is provided liberally. The cost of such insurance at the usual commercial rates would be prohibitive for enlisted men, and even for most officers. The government has created the risk and has in a certain sense deprived the man in its military and naval forces of their insurability, and therefore it pays the extra cost. The officer and enlisted man, however, must exhibit those economic virtues of foresight and thrift and elect for themselves to take this insurance and pay the small cost required.

GERMANY MUST SURRENDER.

From the Louisville Courier-Journal.

The speech of Mr. Lodge in the Senate on the peace which we are to make with Germany was just the sort of speech to be anticipated from that thoroughgoing American.

From the Boston Transcript.

It means that we must go all the way to a decision of unqualified victory, and at whatever cost of effort. And that is precisely our purpose. It is a fight to the finish, "with all we have and are," in which we are engaged.

From the New York Sun.

Senator Lodge started a peace offensive that will give the German statesmen something specific to talk about.

From the Charleston News and Courier.

Senator Lodge made quite a good statement of America's war aims, but he couldn't improve on Woodrow Wilson.

From the New York Herald.

There can be no discussion of terms with Germany, now or later.

From the Savannah News.

Peace by negotiation? Never, until Germany first actually surrenders and her arms are taken from her. There must be a peace by victory, a peace by licking Germany. And no other sort.

From the Philadelphia Press.

Senator Lodge is notified by Hun newspapers that they don't like his speech; and perhaps that's why he made it.

From the New York Evening Sun.

Prisoners say the military spirit in Germany is dying. It cannot be allowed to "play possum" to simulate a natural death. It must be killed.

From the Philadelphia Inquirer.

Our terms to the enemy: Unconditional surrender. Victory over autocracy first. Peace afterward.

FIFTY YEARS AGO IN THE STAR

Some Public Improvements.

In The Star of August 25, 1868, is an article relative to improvements under way under Gen. Michler, superintendent of public buildings and grounds, showing the condition of the Capital fifty years ago in certain respects:

"At Lincoln Square, at the head of East Capitol street, a force of about forty men are employed in filling in and grading, preparatory to laying out the walks, and at the proper time shade trees and choice shrubs will be planted. A great drawback to this otherwise attractive portion of the city is the large pools of stagnant water there, one of these being of sufficient size to take the name of Lake Shinar. This stagnant water has proved a source of disease and no little annoyance at Lincoln barracks and that vicinity, and we hear that Gen. Michler has made an arrangement with Gen. Buell, commanding the infantry at the barracks, by which the latter with his men will undertake the important sanitary work of filling in these ponds, under-draining the ground, etc. This done, we may expect to see this part of the city improving rapidly.

"As soon as the pipe is received from the north Gen. Michler will commence the work of laying the twenty-inch water main from North B street to connect with the main on 1st street, so as to increase the supply of water on Capitol Hill and the navy yard. In consequence of the tax upon the water supply to furnish the water requisite at the navy yard during the working hours, from 8 a. m. to 4 p. m., there has been a very inadequate supply for private use in those hours, the water not rising to the second-story rooms in dwelling houses on the higher ground in all that part of the city.

* * *

Conservatories Under Way.

"The work of completing the important culvert through the Botanic Gardens which, owing to the appropriation giving out, was left unfinished last summer, is again under way, as is also the botanical conservatory, which will be finished to receive the plants this autumn.

"The work of repairing and finishing the conservatory at the President's house, where a choice selection of plants will replace those destroyed by fire a few winters ago, is also progressing rapidly. The different conservatories are now undergoing a thorough cleaning; the fences are being whitewashed, railings painted, benches repaired, etc. At the Smithsonian grounds the fence is being whitewashed and some few men are employed in cleaning up the walks. With the very small amount appropriated for these grounds, it is impossible to put them in the condition they should be.

"The pavement through the Mall along 6th street will soon be commenced. Now let the corporation do its part and throw a bridge across the canal on 6th street and a very important, useful and handsome line of communication with South Washington will be made.

"The repairs on the Long bridge will be completed about the 15th of September and be as thorough as is possible on such an old structure. A new and modern draw will replace the one on the north side, which is rather antique in its style and is said to have been built from a design made in the year 1700 by an Augustine monk named Nichols. We do not know that this is so, but its venerable and primitive appearance makes it extremely probable. It was doubtless a very superior style of draw in 1700, but seems to have outlived its usefulness, as have some other ancient institutions about town. We wish Gen. Michler could have carte blanche for about six months to deal with our old market sheds, the Washington canal, the turnpikes leading out of Washington and some other first-class nuisances."

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Wood Pavements Advocated.

On this subject of local improvements the following, printed in The Star of August 26, 1868, relative to the merits of wood pavements, is of interest:

"With the large amount of street-age in Washington, the quantity of dust manufactured constantly is enormous, serving in dry weather not only to blind and choke everybody, but to spoil all the finer goods exposed to sale in our stores. In wet weather this dust is converted into a most offensive mud, in favor of nobody but the bootblacks and the vendors of overshoes. Now let us suppose the same streets laid with a firm level pavement of wood. The scene would be changed as by magic. The dust would be buried and there would be no material to make more dust. Without dust there would, of course, be no mud. What an improvement it would be to Pennsylvania avenue to have it paved in this way. This street, by its fine lines and magnificent proportions, always attracts the admiration of visitors, and the class of buildings lately erected upon it are of a style to correspond with the noble character of the street, but it has a great drawback in its detestable pavement, full of holes and jutting stones, over which vehicles must creep at a snail's pace, or pay the penalty of a speedy trip to the carriage mender. Pennsylvania avenue ought to be the finest drive in the world and would be if paved in a manner we have described. If our city councils wish to distinguish themselves most creditably they will speedily enter upon the work of providing a style of pavement for the streets of Washington such as is suited to the needs of the city and as will remedy the great defects of the present system."

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Treasury Fountain.

One of the most attractive features of Washington in summer time is the fountain at the north front of the Treasury, with its remarkable growth of a water plant that trails over the edge into the lower basin. This has been photographed innumerable times by tourists. The fountain is mentioned in The Star of August 27, 1868, as follows:

"In the area between the portico of the northern front of the Treasury building and the sidewalk on Pennsylvania avenue a fine fountain is in progress of construction which bids fair to eclipse any ornament of the kind in this section of the country. The main basin will be circular in shape and thirty feet in diameter, and around the outer edge will be four semi-circular sub-basins. In the center of the main basin a granite block five feet square will support a large 'taxa,' twelve feet in diameter, hewn out of a solid block of granite, weighing seventy tons. In the 'taxza' there will be no jets but the water will fall over the sides into the basin, on the circular wall of which are chiseled four massive and beautiful devices of lions' heads, from which the water will flow into the sub-basins. The entire fountain is to be of solid granite and will be a model of neatness, while in point of durability and strength it cannot be surpassed."

HEARD AND SEEN.

There is more than one way to kill a cat.

Or get more sugar than you are entitled to.

Grocery stores recently installed sugar ledgers as a part of their equipment. Now when you want to get your two pounds of sugar you have to "sign up," putting yourself on record for that amount.

Should you slip in the next day and say: "Give me two pounds of sugar, please," the groceryman looks in his little book and there you are!

One trick known to the wise is the following: If some one asks you a question you find it hard to answer, the thing to do is ignore the question. Make out you failed to hear it, and go right on talking about something else. Ignore the question completely, cheerfully and blandly.

While I was shifting from foot to foot, waiting for three clerks to wait on seven women at once, hoping that at last one of those mighty men would condescend to wait on one of their own sex in search of that half-pound of butter, I spotted a woman who knew the above rule of conduct.

She sure did.

"I want two pounds of sugar," she said.

The clerk reached up on the shelf and pulled down the sugar ledger.

"Put your name and address here," he said, opening the book and indicating the place. Then, his faith in mankind—especially womankind—complete, he turned away to get the sugar.

As he went across the store, the woman glanced at the book with hearty interest. She read the names already signed there. She appeared much interested, indeed.

She even took up the book to read. Then, as the clerk turned to come across the floor with the sugar, the woman calmly closed the book and laid it on the counter.

The clerk, taking it for granted that the woman had signed the ledger, delivered over the sugar without question, and the woman went away with it.

And the clerk, with a righteous look upon his face, put the sugar book back in its place.

Oh, Hoover! Hoover!

* * *

The paper hat of childhood days has come back into its own.

You remember those "soldier hats" we used to make out of newspapers? Great peaked things they were, with the news of the world folded into head-covering for some little one who knew no news. A stick, or maybe a wooden gun, completed the equipment of the imaginative.

In September, 1918, the children are making paper hats again.

Today they take the shape of "overseas caps."

It was inevitable.

There is a certain irresistible swagger about the overseas caps, a certain soldierly look, a certain "something." The caps appeal to the eye of old and young alike. I saw an elderly woman the other day with a feminine "overseas cap" on her head.

The children, especially the boys, are making the caps out of paper. It is surprising, too, what capable imitations they produce. Made out of brown paper, the caps are quite creditable.

Wearing paper caps is the children's way of paying tribute to the heroes "over there."

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Hardy pioneers of the wrist watch and the horned spectacle! Eternal credit must go to thee, brave men of five years a-gone, who were the first to don wrist watches or horned spectacles, and wear them, despite the ridicule of the world!

Today those adornments have come into their own. Thousands of soldiers of all nations, men with red blood running in their veins, are wearing wrist watches—or "war watches," as the new term is. No longer need a man be ashamed to wear the band around his wrist bearing the little watch.

As for the horned spectacles, their rise into approbation is quite as marked, although less spectacular. Time was when to wear those comfortable articles to help the vision was to put one's self liable to ridicule in large quantities. But today even the soldiers wear them.

* * *

An old colored man, whose name might well have been Old Black Joe, was standing in front of the District building the other day. He was bent with age, but was singing as he walked slowly along.

Just then a young colored man and woman walked by. They were talking, and just a phrase of their conversation was to be heard as they went by.

"I think that Mr. Johnson," the young colored woman said, "has a premonition——"

That was all, but it was enough for Old Black Joe.

He straightened up, grinned, and said:

"What was dat Mr. Johnson hab, boss?"

CHARLES E. TRACEWELL.

COMMENT ON AIRCRAFT.

From the Richmond Times-Dispatch.

If a plea of guilty had not been entered by the War Department long ago to the charges which the Senate military affairs committee brings, the findings of that body would have startled the country.

From the New York Times.

The appointment of Mr. John D. Ryan as an assistant secretary of war, with the understanding that he is to have full charge of the aircraft program, is a step in the right direction at least.

From the Birmingham Age-Herald.

The airplane failure gives off an extremely bad odor, yet it is our patriotic duty to go to the bottom of it, regardless of wear and tear on olfactory nerves.

From the Philadelphia Inquirer.

We are not going to review the wretched history of that failure. Suffice it to say that the Senate committee recommended the enactment of a law erecting a department of the air with a cabinet officer in charge. The committee considered it to be necessary that there should be a single control with complete authority to act.

From the New York World.

Secretary Baker would deserve a much larger measure of credit for appointing John D. Ryan an assistant secretary of war with full power over the aircraft program if he had not waited until his hand was forced by the report of the Senate subcommittee.

From the Milwaukee Free Press.

As it is, the nation will be gratified with the committee's assurance that the common sense course of reproducing the most approved types of European machines in as great numbers as possible, coincident with the production of liberty motors for the purpose to which they are suited, is at last being followed and that quantity production is now well under way.

From the Charleston News and Courier.

The airplane "scandal" threatens to break out again. Let's wait till we hear from Charles E. Hughes' investigation.

From the Philadelphia Press.

It usually takes the truth a year to catch a lie that has been given a start of twenty-four hours. The truth as proclaimed by Director Ryan should break that record.